

Incident Command System

1. General. The Incident Command System (ICS) and Unified Command System (UCS) under the National Interagency Incident Management System are established management systems that will be utilized during severe heavy weather such as hurricanes to assist Sector personnel in the preparation and aftermath of a passing hurricane. The severity of damage from a hurricane strike in the Sector New Orleans area of responsibility will typically determine whether the Incident Command System (ICS) and/or the Unified Command System (UCS) will be used. This enclosure provides general information and position descriptions for the Sector New Orleans Severe Weather ICS.

2. Incident Command System. The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management tool utilized in response to a routine emergency or when managing a major response to a disaster. ICS is built around five major management activities: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Admin. In the preparation for and aftermath of a hurricane, the IC may activate the ICS. The CO of the Group will assume the role as the Incident Commander and the CO of the MSO in the affected area would assume the role as the Deputy Incident Commander. If both MSOs are within the affected area, the Sector COs will decide who will be designated as the Deputy Incident Commander.

3. Unified Command. The Unified Command System (UCS) is a response effort involving numerous federal, state, and local agencies, with overlapping jurisdictional boundaries or limited functional responsibilities, working together to establish a common set of incident objectives and strategies in response to a large scale disaster. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility, or accountability. There are usually four elements to consider in applying a Unified Command: policy objectives strategies, organization, resources and operations. Since heavy weather, such as the passing of a hurricane, can be devastating to marine industry and the boating public, it may become necessary for federal, state and local agencies to work together under the UCS to minimize the potential damage to the AOR and expedite restoration efforts. If a UCS is established, the organization described in this Enclosure may be expanded or modified to accommodate multiple agencies.

4. Incident Command Post (ICP).

- a. Location. The ICP is the site where the Incident Command or Unified Command organization is set up. Prior to a severe weather event in the AOR, Sector New Orleans will establish an ICP at the (Exact Location TBD) in Alexandria, LA.
- b. Staffing. The ICP will be staffed 24 hours a day, with each member standing a 12 hour watch. The day watch will run from 0700 to 1900. The night watch will run from 1900 to 0700.
- c. Timeline. The decision to establish an ICP must be made early enough to allow members to prepare for the severe weather (i.e. boarding up home windows), and to travel to the ICP site. Members filling ICP billets should be enroute to Alexandria before a city wide evacuation order is issued, because this will be crucial to ensuring

continuous Coast Guard service and also reducing the long travel times associated with an evacuation. Each severe weather event is different from previous incidents, so the exact timeline will have to be determined on a case-by-case basis. The following is a guide to assist with the decision of when to establish the ICP. All times are from the estimated arrival of gale force (tropical storm force) winds in New Orleans or Morgan City.

- (1) 96 hours. The expected target of a tropical storm or hurricane is very difficult to predict 96 hours out. However, in anticipation of an impact to the Sector New Orleans AOR, personnel on the advanced ICP team or personnel who will fill pre-storm billets (i.e. VTS or Command Center watchstanders who remain until Condition Two) should be released to make preparations. Watchstanders should expect to return to the office between the 72 and 60 hour points.
 - (2) 72 hours. At this time, all routine Coast Guard missions should cease. This will allow all efforts to be dedicated to severe weather preparations. The advance ICP team should be dispatched to begin traveling to Alexandria and start setting up.
 - (3) 60 hours. All members filling an ICP billet should be released to make preparations and begin traveling to Alexandria. They should plan to arrive in Alexandria on or before the 48 hour point. If the 48 hour point will fall between 0200 and 1200, the ICP members should be release before 60 hours.
 - (4) 48 hours. If an official evacuation order is going to be given, expect it to be issued close to this time. All ICP members should be in Alexandria, and start preparing for their first watch.
 - (5) 36 hours. The ICP should be fully staffed and operating. If the storm conditions warrant, watchstanders that remained to fill pre-storm billets can be evacuated at this time.
- d. ICP Advance Team. The ICP Advance Team will be composed of one member from the following units, at a minimum: Resources Unit, Communications Unit, Logistics Section and Finance/Admin Section. In addition, 4 members of the Command Center branch will be a part of the ICP Advance Team.
5. Command Staff. The Command Staff will be comprised of the following:
- a. Incident Commander. The IC responsibility is the overall management of the incident.
 - b. Safety Officer. The Safety Officer's function is to develop and recommend measures for assuring personnel safety. In addition, the Safety Officer will assess and/or anticipate hazardous or unsafe conditions, and prepare a Safety Plan.
 - c. Information Officer. The Information Officer is responsible for developing and releasing information about the incident to the news media, to incident personnel, and to other appropriate agencies.

- d. Liaison Officer. The Liaison Officer is the point of contact for assisting and/or coordinating with other agency representatives. The Liaison Officer is the direct link to Coast Guard liaisons at other agencies, such as the Army Corps of Engineers or the State Emergency Operations Center.
- e. ICS Advisor. The ICS advisor will coordinate the organization to ensure proper ICS procedures are followed. The advisor will act independently of the ICS organization and will be given authority to intercede at any level to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the command structure.

6. General Staff.

- a. Operations Section. The Operations Section Chief is responsible for the management of field operations. This person also directs the preparation of unit operations plans and requests or releases resources. The Operations Section will be comprised of the following branches and groups:
 - (1) Prevention Branch. The Prevention Branch will focus on restoring the AOR to its pre-hurricane condition.
 - (a) Reconnaissance/Reconstitution (Recon) Group. The Recon Group will direct and track the landside patrol resources involved in assessing post storm damage. This group will plan patrol routes to provide maximum coverage, identifying critical locations that need immediate attention. These patrols will also provide assessments of Coast Guard facilities.
 - (b) Salvage Group. The primary function of the Salvage Group will be to track post storm salvage activities and provide technical assistance regarding the operations.
 - (c) Facility & Vessel Security Group. This group will track the status of vessels and facilities regulated under the Maritime Transportation Security Act. This may include coordinating the use of equivalent measures for entities that can not operate in compliance with their Vessel or Facility Security Plans. This will also include tracking/coordinating security required for maritime critical infrastructure.
 - (d) Waterways Group. The Waterways group will track the status of major waterways, including closures and anticipated openings. The group will also maintain a status on lock and bridge operations, including a list of all points of contact for those entities. This group may be required to contact non-Coast Guard resources (such as Harbor Tugs) to provide waterway surveys.
 - (e) ATON Group. The primary function of the ATON Group will be to coordinate the survey and replacement of missing/damaged aids to navigation after storm passage.

- (2) Response Branch. The Response Branch will coordinate pollution response and port security activities.
 - (a) Pollution Group. This group will prioritize, direct and track the response to any pollution incidents.
 - (b) Enforcement Group. The Enforcement Group will be responsible for prioritizing, directing and tracking the resources involved in Port Security efforts, including but not limited to armed patrols, vessel boardings and response to suspicious activities. This group will also be responsible for reviewing vessel targeting matrices after the storm.
 - (3) Command Center Branch. This Branch will handle incoming phone calls, and ensure the information goes to the correct ICP member. The Command Center Branch will work closely with the Situation Unit to maintain a Common Operating Picture, but will not be expected to duplicate the efforts of that Unit. The Command Center Branch will also be responsible for drafting attainment messages, information bulletins and SITREPs for the ICP and Sector units. This branch also has personnel dedicated to processing vessel arrival information.
 - (4) Air Operations Branch. The primary function of the Air Operations Branch will be to coordinate air assets. This branch will draft flight schedules and advise the ICP on aircraft-specific capabilities
- b. Planning Section. The Planning Section is responsible for producing a 24-hour Operational Period Incident Action Plan (IAP) after storm passage. The Planning Section will be comprised of the following units:
- (1) Resource Unit. The Resource Unit is responsible for maintaining the status of all Coast Guard resources assigned to the hurricane response. This includes a dedicated person to track the status and location of all Sector Coast Guard personnel. The Resources Unit also includes a dedicated person to track and coordinate Coast Guard Auxiliary resources.
 - (2) Situation Unit. The Situation Unit is responsible for the collection and evaluation of information about the status of the hurricane and hurricane response operations. All ICP members should be conscious of providing status reports to the Situation Unit.
 - (3) Documentation Unit. The Documentation Unit is responsible for the maintenance of accurate, up to date incident files. All ICP members should be conscious of providing copies of paperwork to this unit.
- c. Logistics Section. The Logistics Section is responsible for the service and support to the IC throughout the hurricane response. The Logistics Section will be comprised of the following units:

- (1) Communications Unit. The Communication Unit will be responsible for maintaining the communications plan, including contact numbers for all field resources. The unit will also assist with the maintenance of communications equipment within the ICP.
 - (2) Supply and Procurement Unit. This Unit will assist with the contracting or purchase of equipment, supplies and other resources needed to support ICP or hurricane response operations.
 - (3) Services Unit. The Services Unit is a combination of the traditional ICS Facilities, Medical and Food Units. This unit will serve as the liaison with the site occupied by the ICP, including coordinating additional phone lines or hotel rooms. If issues arise that require medical attention, the Services Unit will coordinate this. This unit will also ensure any subsistence needs for ICP personnel are met.
- d. Finance/Admin Section. The Finance/Admin Section is primarily responsible for documenting hurricane-related expenditures. The Finance/Admin Section will be comprised of the following unit:
- (1) Cost Unit. The Cost Unit will document all costs related to the incident. All ICP members should be conscious of providing cost documentation to this unit. These records will be particularly important for requesting reimbursement. The Cost Unit should also account for the costs associated with the use of Coast Guard resources and personnel.